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SUBJECT: FIVE YEARS WAITING IN THE WINGS: CHILDREN'S LAW SIGNED
INTO TURKISH LAW

¶1. Turkish President Gul on December 1 signed into law the "Children's Law" which includes language implementing the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction. The Turkish Parliament passed the law on November 22.

¶2. This marks the successful culmination of a five-year effort by post, spanning the terms of three U.S. Ambassadors, to get this legislation enacted. An especially concerted push for passage of the law occurred this past spring: Consular Affairs Assistant Secretary Maura Harty visited Turkey and made a series of calls on

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government officials to urge action, the Ambassador held a dinner focused on the Hague Convention for selected parliamentarians, and Embassy officers met on two occasions with governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) whips.

¶3. The legislation will be particularly helpful to law enforcement officials here. In the past, they have been hamstrung by Turkish domestic law that makes execution of court orders very time-consuming. With the new legislation, police officers now have the authority to immediately execute court orders and take custody of the abducted child even in the absence of an abducting parent.
WILSON